READ ME FIRST

OVERVIEW

What is AgComplyIT?

AgComplyIT is an Excel™-based tool that runs on your own personal computer. The regulatory compliance education Project developed the tool to help you identify and plan your response to the federal and state regulations that affect your production operations. The tool uses your responses to a list of questions to sort out the most probable regulatory captures. Different answers to the same questions will bring different results.

What it covers and what it doesn't.

The tool looks at the trigger points in state and federal regulations dealing only with production agriculture. At this time, it doesn't cover local regulations like building codes and zoning nor does it cover value-added agriculture not directly dealing with production like agritourism or on-farm processing. Those interested in local regulations might try www.CalGold.ca.gov GO TO www.CalGold.ca.gov

It has never been our intent to guarantee that using AgComplyIT will meet all regulatory requirements. We are attempting to simplify the process by supplying resources and contacts to let you to develop your own compliance plans. One-size would never fit all and we would never try to suggest that it could. If you are concerned with your regulatory compliance, you may wish to contact an attorney specializing in this field.

SYSTEM AND PROGRAM COMPATIBILITY

AgComplyIT has been tested and runs on Windows XP, XP Professional, and Macintosh OS 8.5 - 9.2.2 with Excel™ 4.0, Excel 2001, and Excel 2003. If you have your Excel™ security set to High, you will need to reset them to Medium in order to have the option to run Macros.

Fonts used in the program are Times New Roman and Trebuchet MS. The Page Setup is set to .5-inch margins all around. The best screen resolution is 400x600 or better.

You will need Acrobat Reader to use the PDF files either through the Action Plans or by browsing the Resource folder. You can download a free copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader™ from http://www.adobe.com/.

CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Regulatory Compliance Education Project would like to publicly express our deep gratitude to the following very busy people who took a piece of their time to work with and review the beta copy of AgComplyIT. These folks also had the courage to tell us what we needed to hear rather than what we hoped to. They have made this a better tool for all of you.

Paul Davy, Supervising Agricultural/ Standards Inspector, San Diego County

Leonard Diggs, Shone Farm Manager, Santa Rosa Junior College

Dawn Nielsen, Deputy Agricultural Commissioner, San Diego County

Beth Pratt, Director Napa Valley College, Small Business Development Center

Jerry Prieto, Jr., Agricultural Commissioner, Fresno County

Robert Roach, Assistant Agricultural Commissioner, Monterey County

Scott M. Seus, third-generation farmer, Modoc County

Jim Sullins, County Director, UC Cooperative Extension, Tulare County

Dave Whitmer, Agricultural Commissioner, Napa County

GETTING STARTED USING AGCOMPLYIT

1. Place the CD in your CD drive. Windows users: drag the folder called AgComplyIT to your C drive. Mac users: Drag the folder called AgComplyIT to your desktop. Open the AgComplyIT file and click on the Read Me First file. After using the Read Me First file, click on the AgComplyIT file to open it. Currently this runs on Windows 98 and up and Mac OS 8.5 - 9.2.2 with Excel™ 2001, 2003, and 4.0.
2. Your computer should open Excel™ from Microsoft. If you don't have Excel™, you will not be able to run the program.
3. A dialog box will appear asking you if you wish to enable macros. You must enable macros for the program to run. Click "Enable Macros."
4. The program will open on a sheet called Terms of Use. If you agree to the terms click "Agree". If you do not agree, please remove the AgComplyIT files from your computer and return or destroy the CD..
5. Business Data. By inputting this data, you will create personalized Action Plans. It is not necessary for you to complete the Business Data worksheet for the program to run, but will help you keep track of your plans. You will need to re-answer the questions for each of your individual farm or ranch units.
6. Click on the next worksheet tab labeled "Questions." For each question there is a yes/no pull-down menu. Click on yes or no to answer the questions.
7. If you do not raise animals you may click on the "No animals" button to go to your next question. If you do raise animals, you should indicate the number of head of each.
8. When you have finished answering all the questions, click the "Complete" button. The flashing you see is AgComplyIT testing your answers against the trigger points for each regulation. This will take several minutes. AgComplyIT will put an Excel™ file on your desk top (Mac) or C drive (Windows) called My Compliance Plan and open it for you.
9. The first sheet you will see is the Regulatory Capture List. Based on your answers to the questions, these are the state and federal regulations most likely to apply to your operation. For each of these regulations, AgComplyIT has generated an Action Plan Worksheet to help you develop a response plan.
10. Action Plans have the name of the lead agency, hopefully a live person to contact, Both websites and pdf files are there for you to learn more about the background of each regulation and find out how to comply with it. You can break your plan into steps and assign a timeline to your effort to comply.
11. Regulations change with time. You should also set a date to review you compliance plans the same way you would review business or marketing plans or your insurance coverage.
12. Just like having good source documents for your accountant, you should keep printed copies of the public resources you use in your compliance planning. Print web pages on the date you find them, they will change over time and your plan may need to change too, but you will have a record or why you did what you did.

For more detailed instructions, on the use of AgComplyIT, please see the Users Manual.

This program is brought to you through the generous support of a Partnership Grant from the United States Department of Agriculture, Risk Management Agency with the Chancellor's Office of the California Community Colleges Economic and Workforce Development Program (EWDP) through the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) program and FACTS, and agriculture education company. The RMA owns the copyright to these materials..

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